



Electronic Meetings: Examples of the Issues

Numerous issues often arise when meetings via electronic means (telephone, teleconference, audio conference, video conference, Internet, etc.) are discussed. Shown below are examples of these issues.

1. What constitutes a meeting?
2. What is the purpose for using the electronic means?
 - Is the purpose to facilitate public input—that is, to allow testimony by individuals who otherwise could not be present?
 - ✓ Do any requirements of the open meeting law apply? If yes, how will they be met?
 - ✓ Are there any costs? If yes, what? Who pays for them?
 - ✓ How does the chair (or other designated person) control the presentation of the testimony?
 - ✓ How do members ask questions of the person presenting testimony?
 - ✓ Can all members and the public hear/see the testimony being given?
 - Is the purpose to hold the actual meeting of members?
 - ✓ How will the notice, access and other requirements of the open meeting law be met?
 - ✓ Are there any costs? If yes, what? Who pays for them?
 - ✓ Are multiple meeting venues required? If yes, how will the various meeting venues controlled? By whom?
 - ✓ How does the chair (or other designated person) control debate or discussions during the meeting—especially if multiple venues are used?
 - ✓ How do you determine if a quorum is present?
 - ✓ How will handouts be distributed—especially “last minute” handouts?
 - ✓ Who controls any records of the meeting?
 - ✓ Are members allowed to vote? If yes, how do you verify who is voting?
 - ✓ If meeting in closed session, how do you 1) verify that only authorized individuals are present, 2) control access by unauthorized persons and 3) maintain confidentiality?
 - Are members using the electronic means in order to circumvent the requirements of the open meeting law?